

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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P R 101429Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7014
INFO SECDEF WASHDC
AMEMBASSY ASUNCION
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
USCINCSO QUARRY HTS., C.Z.

C O N F I D E N T I A L MONTEVIDEO 2666

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MPOL, PGOV, PINT, SHUM, UY
SUBJ: SIGNIFICANT POSITIVE STEPS BY MILITARY MODERATES
ANTICIPATED IN NEAR FUTURE

REF: MONTEVIDEO 2183 (NOTAL)

1. REFTEL REPORTED ASSURANCES FROM GENERAL RAIMUNDEZ (COMMANDER FOURTH DIVISION, CHAIRMAN OF ARMED FORCES POLITICAL COMMISSION, AND KEY MEMBER OF GEN. ALVAREZ'S MODERATE MILITARY GROUP) TO CHARGE ON JUNE 30 THAT, FOLLOWING A TWO-MONTH PAUSE, WE COULD EXPECT POSITIVE STEPS BY ALVAREZ AND SIGNIFICANT IMPLEMENTATION OF HIS PROGRAM BY THE END OF 1978. DURING THE ENSUING WEEKS EMBASSY HAS CONTINUED TO RECEIVE INDICATIONS FROM A NUMBER OF CIVILIAN AND MILITARY SOURCES THAT THE TIME-TABLE DESCRIBED BY RAIMUNDEZ IS ACCURATE AND THAT DURING EARLY SEPTEMBER GEN. ALVAREZ WILL INDEED TAKE SOME SIGNIFICANT, POSITIVE STEPS.

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2. ON AUGUST 9 EL DIA PUBLISHER AND ALVAREZ INTIMATE, CARLOS SCHECK, GAVE CHARGE AND PAO A DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE SPECIFIC MOVES CONTEMPLATED BY ALVAREZ. ACCORDING TO SCHECK A PACKAGE INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING WILL BE ANNOUNCED WITHIN TWENTY DAYS:

A) LIFTING OF RESTRICTIONS ON THE PRESS

B) RESTORATION OF THE RIGHT OF ASSEMBLY

C) RESTORATION OF THE RIGHT OF HABEAS CORPUS

D) REVOCATION OF THE EMERGENCY SECURITY MEASURES
(MEDIDAS PRONTAS DE SEGURIDAD)

E) MODIFICATION OF INSTITUTIONAL ACT NO. 8 TO
REVOKE THE FOUR-YEAR PROBATIONARY PERIOD
CURRENTLY IMPOSED ON ALL CIVILIAN JUDGES.

SCHECK, WHO PROFESSED TO HAVING BEEN INVOLVED IN THE
DRAFTING OF THESE MEASURES ALONG WITH FORMER FOREIGN
MINISTER JUAN CARLOS BLANCO AND OTHER CIVILIAN ADVISERS
TO THE MILITARY, SAID THAT THIS PACKAGE WOULD BE EFFECTED
BY A PRESIDENTIAL DECREE. THIS DECREE WOULD BE ANNOUNCED
IN A COMMUNIQUE WHICH WOULD NOTE THAT THE MEASURES HAD
BEEN RECOMMENDED TO THE PRESIDENT BY THE COMMANDERS
IN CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES.

3. COMMENT: IF IMPLEMENTED, THESE FIVE MEASURES WOULD
GO A LONG WAY TOWARD RETURNING URUGUAY TO THE NORMALCY
WHICH GENERAL ALVAREZ CONSISTENTLY HAS DECLARED TO BE
HIS GOAL. ENACTMENT OF THE ENTIRE AMBITIOUS PACKAGE
WOULD BE SOMETHING OF A GREAT LEAP FORWARD IN THE
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URUGUAYAN CONTEXT, WHILE EVEN PARTIAL IMPLEMENTATION
WOULD CONSTITUTE SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS. WE ARE NOW
LESS SKEPTICAL THAN INDICATED IN REF COMMENT, TO THE
EXTENT THAT WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT SOME POSITIVE STEPS
ARE LIKELY TO BE TAKEN IN THE NEAR FUTURE.
CHEEK

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